

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER  
AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1040

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 1040.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Georgia?

There was no objection.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HON.  
NANCY PELOSI, DEMOCRATIC  
LEADER OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from NANCY PELOSI, Democratic Leader:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
OFFICE OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER,  
Washington, DC, April 3, 2003.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,  
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to (20 U.S.C. 955(b) note), I hereby appoint, Rep. Betty McCollum of Minnesota, to the National Council on the Arts for the 108th Congress.

Best regards,

NANCY PELOSI,  
Democratic Leader.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HON.  
NANCY PELOSI, DEMOCRATIC  
LEADER OF THE HOUSE

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
OFFICE OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER,  
Washington, DC, April 3, 2003.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,  
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to (2 U.S.C. 88b-3), I hereby appoint Rep. Dale E. Kildee of Michigan, to the House of Representatives Page Board for the 108th Congress.

Best regards,

NANCY PELOSI,  
Democratic Leader.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF GAL-  
LAUDET UNIVERSITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 4303, and the order of the House of January 8, 2003, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Member of the House to the Board of Trustees of Gallaudet University:

Ms. WOOLSEY of California.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BISHOP of Utah). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extenstions of Remarks.)

CUBA'S CRACKDOWN ON  
DISSIDENT COMMUNITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, last week I stood before this House and spoke of the opening stages in Castro's outright assault on human rights and democracy. I spoke of Castro's decision to arrest over 80 nonviolent human rights advocates, pro-democracy leaders and independent journalists, in what has become a campaign by the regime to silence all voices of opposition on the island. Hoping that his actions would be overshadowed by the situation in Iraq, Castro has declared war on his own people.

Among those arrested include signers and supporters of a joint statement from the Cuban dissident community to the European Union, promoters of the Varela Project, members of the independent press, owners of independent libraries, and members of Cuba's independent civil society.

When I last spoke on this situation, it was feared that those arrested would be prosecuted under a much-criticized 1999 Cuban law that makes it a crime to publish subversive materials provided by the U.S. Government, and that carries with it a harsh prison sentence. Those fears, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, have become a reality, as Castro has begun the trial of many of the detainees, seeking sentences that range from 12 years to decades and even requesting life in prison for some.

Furthermore, the prisoners have been refused access to their wives and families, have been allowed little or no legal defense, and have even been denied the ability to read the State's case against them.

Mr. Speaker, the Cuban Government has provided no information about the trials. Authorities outside two of the trials barred access to international journalists.

Castro's wave of oppression was also accompanied by a decision to limit the travel of Americans with the U.S. Interests Section, quarantining our diplomats to the province of Havana. Castro has become increasingly irritated by the actions of James Cason, chief of the U.S. Interests Section, and Cason's continued contact with members of the Cuban pro-democracy movement. Cason and other American diplomats have met in public with opposition leaders and independent journalists in an effort basically to encourage democracy and freedom of information on the island.

Mr. Speaker, these recent actions by the Castro regime are simply the next

step in the systematic denial of even the most basic human rights for the citizens of Cuba. I, and many of my colleagues, have often urged this body to be wary of Castro and the Cuban Government. These latest developments are nothing new, but we must continue to be vigilant and not allow these deeds to go unnoticed.

Castro must know that despite his hope that the world would be looking the other way, we are noticing, and that these actions will not be allowed to continue.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extenstions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressd the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to proceed with my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

GEORGE "GODFATHER" THOMP-  
SON: A LIFETIME OF SERVICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to honor George "Godfather" Thompson, one of the most remarkable men in my life and many of the lives of individuals who have played Rattler football at Florida A&M. Tomorrow night, friends and families and other players at Florida A&M are going to come together to pay tribute to this wonderful man who has done so much on behalf of so many, a man of great humility and compassion. When he speaks of Florida A&M and Rattler football, he gets chill bumps all over his body.

His heart is so big that those who go to Florida A&M with very little money, very little guidance or those that have great guidance, he takes the time to speak with them.

This Nation loves sports and for good reasons, but the right coach and guidance and sports, particularly in team sports, are fun and effective ways to teach young people the great lessons of life, that discipline and hard work are necessary for success but not necessarily guaranteed; that those who are